

Town of Lincoln

Budget Board Meeting

March 3, 2010

Present:

**Linda Noble Claudette Lussier Carl Brunetti Joe Renning
Sheila Chisholm Jeremiah O'Grady Robert Ericson Hagop Jawharjian**

Absent:

Cheryl Ethier Greg Leonard John Picozzi

In Attendance:

Superintendent, Georgia Fortunato, Lori Miller, School Committee Members Mary Anne Roll and Kristine Donabedian, School Department administrators and staff. Also in attendance were Town Administrator T. Joseph Almond and Town Councilor Keith Macksoud.

Call To Order

The meeting began at 7:35 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

School Department Budget Presentation

Lincoln Superintendent of Schools, Ms. Georgia Fortunato thanked the Budget Board for the opportunity to present their budget and to share their vision that the Lincoln school system would be “a nationally recognized, world class school district within the next 5 years; a leading school district in Rhode Island within 3 years; and create a learning community comprised of parents, community and business stakeholders.”

A Power Point presentation outlined the roles of the School Committee, Superintendent and Administrators in pursuing and achieving these goals. Handouts accompanied the presentation.

The requested 2010-2011 school budget totals \$48,580,965 which is a 2.93% increase over the 2009-2010 budget of \$47,197,873. Superintendent Fortunato noted that several factors made the preparation of this budget very challenging. In particular: the closing of Fairlawn building; return to neighborhood school educational model from an early learning center educational model; and the mandated implementation by RIDE of a new uniform chart of accounts.

Director of Non-Instructional Operations, Angelo Mencucci then followed with a brief presentation outlining all requested Capital Projects. Details were included in the handout provided earlier. The total costs of these projects are estimated at \$703,925. It was also noted that the Budget Board will hold its annual Tour of School Facilities on Saturday, March 13 beginning at 8:00AM at the Lincoln Senior High complex.

Town Administrator Almond noted that he had sent Chairman Noble a detailed list of his recommendation for a \$500,000 school capital line which is a \$203,925 adjustment from the school department's request.

Town Administrator Almond also explained that he had included only those school capital projects that, in his opinion, "qualified" or met

the definition under state law.

A short recess was called.

Town Moderator Robert Ericson left the meeting due to an unforeseen family commitment.

The meeting reconvened.

Minutes

The minutes of February 25, 2010 were distributed for review. Two changes were noted and corrected.

Joe Renning made a motion, seconded by Sheila Chisholm, to approve the minutes of February 25, 2010 as amended.

The motion passed.

Correspondence

There was none.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Old Business

School Committee Budget Recommendation

There was no discussion at this time.

Sub-Committee Reports

Personnel: Carl Brunetti

Carl reported that he was able to reconcile the worksheets provided for Personnel. He was not given enough support information to reconcile the benefits. Carl will request additional information regarding full-time equivalents or FTE's. He will also request the latest information about Retirements. Five employees are eligible or have announced their intention.

Purchased Services: Jeremiah O'Grady

Jay continues to investigate the object code line for Charter Schools. This line has been increased by \$436,000 (67 students at \$8,000 each) over the 2009-2010 budget. While the school department has explained the increase, he is still trying to understand the rationale. Jay has asked Carl to request a copy of the Food Services agreement.

Closing/Leasing of Fairlawn: Bob Ericson

Bob Ericson had reported that the Town Administrator is considering multiple offers from public, charter and private schools for a two-year lease of Fairlawn. The \$100,000 annual rent reflects the current best offers. Lease agreements are presently being reviewed by the Town Solicitor. The lease agreement must then be approved by the Town Council and the Financial Town Meeting. The Town Administrator will provide the resolution language for this proposal. Two questions

remain unanswered: What will the savings be to the school department in the 2010-2011 budget and why is the revenue for the lease included in both the Town Administrator's local revenue and noted as an offset to school department budget in Charter School tuitions?

Special Education: Joe Renning

Joe is still reviewing the data and will make calls to individual schools for tuition costs.

Transportation: Sheila Chisholm

Sheila reported that after reviewing the contract, the cost is determined by the number of elementary school buses. The current contract is in effect until July 2012. She will continue to investigate the terms.

Non-Instructional: Hagop Jawharjian

The line for substitute custodians has been increased and there is a question as to why?

Curriculum: Linda Noble

Linda noted that Professional Development resources will be used more efficiently because rather than send several teachers for training, the Lincoln School Department now sends administrators who then return to their schools to share the knowledge at the building or district level.

Non-Certified Support Staff: Claudette Lussier

Claudette reported that Carl is looking at all personnel, including support and administrators.

Other

Chairperson Noble asked whether the school department had adopted a policy with regards to the School Administration Building – because despite the fact that the original plan for school renovations, Torrado Report, recommended that the district abandon the Admin. Building because it was too costly to renovate and upgrade. Has there been a new philosophy since renovations have been requested?

Chairperson Noble also suggested that Administrators should take a pay freeze. Members also discussed increasing healthcare contributions to 20%; investigate the dollars being spent on out of district tuitions for special education students; perhaps suggest a more realistic number for transfers to Charter Schools; further discuss the financial impact to the 2010-2011 budget on the closing of Fairlawn.

Meeting Schedule

Chairperson Noble entertained a motion to add two meeting dates to the schedule: Wednesday, March 10 and Wednesday, March 24. Motion was made by Claudette Lussier and seconded by Hagop

Jawharjian. Motion passed.

New Business

Town Administrator's 2010-2011 Budget Recommendation

The Town Administrator's budget recommendation will be discussed at an upcoming meeting.

June 30, 2009 Audit Report

The Audit Report and Management Letter will be discussed at an upcoming meeting.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Adjourn

Jeremiah O'Grady made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Joe Renning. The meeting adjourned at 9:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Claudette J. Lussier